



Transmitted Via Electronic Mail

December 20, 2012

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region II
Emergency and Remedial Response Division
290 Broadway, 19th Floor, Room W-20
New York, NY 10007-1866
Attn: Alice Yeh

**Re: Monthly Progress Report No. 14
Combined Sewer Overflow/Stormwater Outfall Investigation
Diamond Alkali Superfund Site (Lower Passaic River Study Area)**

Dear Ms. Yeh:

Submitted herein is the Monthly Progress Report for work performed as part of the Combined Sewer Overflow/Stormwater Outfall Investigation for the Diamond Alkali Superfund Site (Lower Passaic River Study Area). This progress report has been prepared pursuant to Section IX Paragraph 53 of the Administrative Settlement Agreement and Order on Consent between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Occidental Chemical Corporation, Index No. CERCLA-02-2011-2016.

If you have any questions, please call me at 732.246.5851.

Sincerely,

Tierra Solutions, Inc.

Paul Brzozowski
Remediation Manager
On behalf of Occidental Chemical Corporation
(as successor to Diamond Shamrock Chemicals Company)

cc: Carol E. Dinkins, Vinson & Elkins
Willard Potter, de maximis, inc.
Karyllan Dodson Mack, K&L Gates

CSO-SWO_Investigation_Monthly_Report_No_I4.docx

10th Floor

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MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT NO. 14
COMBINED SEWER OVERFLOW/STORMWATER OUTFALL INVESTIGATION
DIAMOND ALKALI SUPERFUND SITE (LOWER PASSAIC RIVER STUDY AREA)
WORK PERIOD: NOVEMBER 2012

Actions Taken Towards Achieving Compliance with the Order

- ☐ Tierra coordinated with Groundwater Treatment and Technology (GWTT) to continue modifications to the sample collection system and trailer.
- ☐ Tierra initiated weather monitoring activities.
- ☐ Tierra coordinated with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commissioners (PVSC) to obtain permission to return effluent to the sample collection manhole. Tierra has also continued to coordinate with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) regarding their approval to return effluent to the sample collection manhole and, while the NJDEP indicates that no permit is necessary, Tierra still awaits a letter confirming this policy.
- ☐ Tierra submitted the results of the third performance evaluation (PE) sample for organochlorine pesticide analysis to the USEPA on November 1, 2012.
- ☐ Tierra submitted a memorandum documenting the sample collection system and trailer field demonstration and laboratory low solids mass (LSM) sample separation demonstration to USEPA on November 12, 2012. The laboratory LSM separation demonstration memo also included the verification of the general filtration 0.5 micron wound filter cartridge used in the secondary separation procedure.
- ☐ Tierra collected the pre-program blanks at the Lister Avenue Facility on November 12 and 13, 2012.
- ☐ Tierra completed the LSM dissolved phase method blank study on November 20, 2012.
- ☐ Tierra distributed the communication protocol for sampling activities to USEPA, PVSC and the Cooperating Parties Group on November 1, 2012.

USEPA and Other Information/Correspondence Received

- ☐ On November 19, 2012 USEPA instructed Tierra to submit the organochlorine pesticide PE report when completed, absent the subject analytical data. USEPA reserved its rights to request the raw, unvalidated data associated with the pesticide PE in the future. USEPA further instructed that the Phase I and Phase II sampling results be submitted as soon as they are available (i.e., unvalidated) and that the data is resubmitted following validation.

Sampling or Testing Results Received or Generated During the Course of Implementing the Work

- ☐ None during this reporting period.

Future Plans, Actions and Data Scheduled for December 2012 and January 2013

- ☐ Continue weather monitoring.
- ☐ Complete modifications to the sample collection system and trailer (estimate late December 2012).
- ☐ Complete memorandum documenting the field reconnaissance activities (estimate late December 2012).
- ☐ Submit the results of the LSM dissolved phase method blank study (estimate late December 2012).

- ☐ Submit a modification letter which will include revisions to the Combined Sewer Overflow/Stormwater Outfall Investigation Quality Assurance Project Plan (CSO/SWO Investigation QAPP) – Lower Passaic River Study Area, Revision 1, May 2011, Addendum issued June 2012. Revisions will include the agreed-upon corrective action for organochlorine pesticide analysis (the addition of a second source standard), field standard operating procedure modifications, and revisions to Worksheet #15 based upon the results of the LSM dissolved phase method blank study. These revisions will also address USEPA's October 3, 2012 comments (estimate late December 2012).
- ☐ Obtain permission from PVSC to return effluent to the sample collection manhole (estimate late December 2012).
- ☐ Submit the results of the pre-program blank studies (estimate early January 2013).
- ☐ Initiate Phase I sampling activities per approval from USEPA (estimate mid-January 2013).

Actual or Potential Violations, Other Problems Encountered and Corrective Actions

- ☐ None during this reporting period.

Delays Encountered or Anticipated and Mitigation Actions

- ☐ On November 12, 2012, Tierra proposed to USEPA in a telephone conversation to delay Phase I sampling until January of 2013 due to the impacts from Hurricane Sandy on the PVSC system. On November 19, 2012, USEPA sent an email to Tierra concurring with Tierra's proposal to delay sampling under the current conditions since these would not be representative of PVSC's normal operations.